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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/709,655	05/20/2004	Gregory K. Otten	22.3091	3654

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EXAMINER

COZART, JERMIE E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3726

DATE MAILED: 01/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/709,655

Applicant(s)

OTTEN ET AL.

Examiner

Jermie Cozart

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**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --****Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 24-44 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 20 May 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                                                                  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                                         | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9/28/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                                |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, claims 1-13 in the reply filed on December 12, 2005 is acknowledged.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1, 3-9, 10-16, and 17-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bradford (4,345,785).

Bradford discloses coupling a first connector (16) to a second connector (12). A portion of the second connector (12) is removed via drilling series of circumferentially spaced holes in the outer surface of the second connector (12) after the first and second connectors (12, 16) are coupled together (via longitudinal compressive pressure) to thereby define a recess (i.e. series of holes) in the second connector, and coupling an anti-rotation member (24) to at least one of the first and second connectors (12, 16), wherein the anti-rotation member threadingly engages at least a portion of the first connector and is adapted to engage at least a portion of the recess (i.e. series of holes) in the second connector (12). The anti-rotation member has a generally cylindrical configuration (fig. 2), and is formed as an externally threaded fastener. The removing of a portion of the second connector (12) comprises removing at least a

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portion of the second connector (12) that is positioned within an area (i.e. recess, fig.2) defined by an opening in the first connector (16). *See column 2, line 65 – column 3, line 46, and figures 1-3 for further clarification.*

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 11 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bradford (4,345,785).

Bradford discloses all of the claimed subject matter except for the first connector being a pin connector and the second connector being a box connector.

At the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide the first connector as a pin connector and the second connector being a box connector because Applicant has not disclosed that providing the first connector as a pin connector and the second connector being a box connector provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicant's invention to perform equally well with the first connector as a box connector and the second connector as a pin connector because the connectors would be sufficiently joined one another.

Therefore, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify Bradford to obtain the invention as specified in claims 11 and 18

6. Claims 2, 10, 17, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bradford in view of Miller (4,487,433).

Bradford discloses all of the claimed subject matter except for coupling the first connector to the second connector comprises threadingly coupling the first connector to the second connector, or further comprising, prior to coupling the anti-rotation member to at least one of the first and second connectors, forming internal threads on a surface of the recess in the second connector.

Miller discloses coupling the first connector (14) to the second connector (18) comprises threadingly (via threads 26) coupling the first connector to the second connector, and prior to coupling the anti-rotation member (40) to at least one of the first and second connectors, forming internal threads (i.e. screw threads adapted to receive member 40) on a surface of the recess (36) in the second connector (18). *See column 2, lines 3 – 50, and figure 1 for further clarification.*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to threadingly couple the first connector and the second connector of Bradford to one another, and prior to coupling the anti-rotation member to at least one of the first and second connectors, form internal threads on a surface of the recess in the second connector of Bradford, in light of the teachings of Miller, in order to effectively join the connectors to one another and prevent unwanted rotation between both connectors.

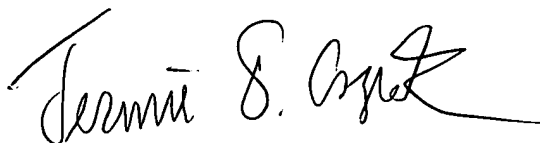
**Conclusion**

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The references cited on the attached PTO-892 are cited the coupling of pipe members with anti-rotation members.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jermie Cozart whose telephone number is 571-272-4528. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 7:30 am - 6:00 pm.

9. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marc Jimenez can be reached on 571-272-4530. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

10. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jermie Cozart  
Examiner  
Art Unit 3726